

REMARKS

Claims 1-16, 19, 20, 25-30, 33, 34, 40-51, and 53-58 are pending, with claims 1, 19, 20, 25, 33, 34, and 58 being independent. Claims 1-4, 7-16, 19, 20, 25, 28-30, 33, 34, 42, and 46-51 have been amended, and claims 17, 18, 21-24, 31, 32, and 35-39 have been cancelled. New claims 53-58 have been added. Support for the amendments and the new claims is found in the application at, for example, originally filed claim 21; page 17, line 3 to page 20, line 7; and FIGS. 7-9B. No new matter has been added.

Claim Rejections—35 U.S.C. § 101

Claims 20, 34, 48, and 51 have been rejected as being directed toward non-statutory subject matter. As shown above, independent claims 20 and 34 have been amended, and the amendments are believed to address the Examiner's concerns. Claims 48 and 51 respectively depend from claim 20 and claim 34 and recite statutory subject matter for at least the reasons that claims 20 and 34 recite statutory subject matter. Accordingly, applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Claim Rejections—35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 19, 20, 25, 33, 34, and 46-51 have been rejected as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,393,465 (Leeds) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,760,752 (Liu). Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection because neither Leeds, Liu, nor any proper combination of these references describes or suggests modifying one of first electronic data and second electronic data with endorsement information and enabling access to the first electronic data and the second electronic data concurrently with the endorsement information that visually distinguishes the first electronic data from the second electronic data in a single electronic mail inbox, as recited in amended claim 1.

Leeds is directed to a spam filtering system that uses a scoring system to determine whether incoming e-mail can be deleted. See Leeds at abstract and Fig. 6b (a rating is assigned a message and used to process the message); see also Leeds at col. 4, lines 55-60 (a score of 100

can be used to trigger automatic deletion of a message). The scoring system in Leeds performs analytical operations before the user perceives a message. However, Leeds does not describe how a message is presented to a user. In particular, Leeds' techniques involve determining whether an email is a junk e-mail (or spam), and removing the junk e-mail from a user's inbox before the intended recipient reviews their inbox, so as to relieve the intended recipient of the burden of having to even perceive the receipt of junk e-mail. See Leeds at col. 6, lines 25-34; Fig. 6b (showing steps 238 and 248 that "file mail based on confidence rating rules"); col. 8, lines 4-9. See also Leeds at Fig. 4 (showing that a message is marked as a suspected junk e-mail and routed "to trash or junk e-mail suspect holding location").

Thus, because Leeds does not appear to contemplate presenting junk e-mail to the recipient, Leeds also does not visually distinguish between junk e-mail and other e-mails. As such, even if junk e-mails could somehow be equated with an endorsed message or a nonendorsed message, because the junk e-mails are not presented, the junk e-mails would not be presented with other e-mails concurrently with endorsement information that visually distinguishes the junk e-mails from the other e-mails.

Accordingly, Leeds does not describe or suggest modifying one of first electronic data and second electronic data with endorsement information and enabling access to first electronic data and second electronic data concurrently with endorsement information that visually distinguishes the first electronic data from the second electronic data in a single electronic mail inbox, as recited by claim 1.

Like Leeds, Liu also does not describe or suggest the subject matter of claim 1. Liu relates to techniques for transferring a message securely from a sender to a recipient over a network. See Liu at abstract. A user interface can be manipulated to compose a secure e-mail message that includes fields for the recipient's e-mail address 775, a sender's e-mail address 776, a public title 777, and a private title 778. See Liu at col. 25, lines 2-8. The public title 777 is a placeholder for a title to be displayed when the secured e-mail is displayed in a conventional e-mail application, and the private title 778 is only visible when viewed with a viewer 130 (which can be used to view a secure e-mail). See Lui at col. 25, lines 14-16 and col. 12, lines 31-32.

The viewer displays status of the sender's public key is displayed along with the contents of the secure message. See Liu at col. 27, lines 35-36. As shown in Figure 9 of Liu, a user interface presented by the viewing application includes a series of visual indicators 900 are provided to indicate the status of the signature verification process. See Liu at col. 27, lines 44-46 and FIG. 9.

However, the viewer shows the contents of a particular e-mail message and the visual indicators 900 show the status of the particular e-mail, and, thus, the visual indicators 900 do not visually distinguish first electronic data from second electronic data. Instead, the visual indicators 900 merely provide additional information about the e-mail as the e-mail is shown in the viewing application. Accordingly, the viewer 130 does not enable presentation of first electronic data and second electronic data concurrently with endorsement information that visually distinguishes the first electronic data from the second electronic data in a single electronic mail inbox.

Thus, like Leeds, Liu also does not describe or suggest modifying one of first electronic data and second electronic data with endorsement information and enabling access to first electronic data and second electronic data concurrently with endorsement information that visually distinguishes the first electronic data from the second electronic data in a single electronic mail inbox, as recited in amended claim 1.

For at least the reason that neither Leeds, Liu, nor any proper combination of these references describes or suggests modifying one of first electronic data and second electronic data with endorsement information and enabling access to first electronic data and second electronic data concurrently with endorsement information that visually distinguishes the first electronic data from the second electronic data in a single electronic mail inbox, applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 and claim 46, which depends from claim 1.

Amended independent claims 19 and 20 recite subject matter similar to that recited in claim 1, except that claim 19 does so in the context of an apparatus and claim 20 does so in the context of a computer program. Accordingly, claims 19 and 20 are believed to be allowable over

Leeds, Liu and any proper combination of these references. Thus, applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 19 and 20 along with claims 47 and 48, which respectively depend from claim 19 and claim 20.

Among other features, amended independent claim 25 recites presenting first electronic data and second electronic data concurrently with endorsement information that visually distinguishes the first electronic data from the second electronic data in a single electronic mail inbox. As discussed above, neither Leeds, Liu, nor any proper combination of these references describes or suggests enabling access to first electronic data and second electronic data concurrently with endorsement information that visually distinguishes the first electronic data from the second electronic data in a single electronic mail inbox. Similarly, neither Leeds, Liu, nor any proper combination of these references describes or suggests presenting first electronic data and second electronic data concurrently with endorsement information that visually distinguishes the first electronic data from the second electronic data in a single electronic mail inbox, as recited in amended claim 25. Accordingly, applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 25.

Amended independent claims 33 and 34 recite subject matter similar to that recited in amended claim 25, except claims 33 and 34 do so in the context of an apparatus and a computer program, respectively. Accordingly, applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 33 and 34 and their respective dependent claims 50 and 51 for reasons similar to those discussed above with respect to claim 25.

Dependent claims 2, 3, 5-7, 9-15, 26, 27, 29, 30, 36, 37, 40, 41, and 43-45

Dependent claims 2, 3, 5-7, 9-15, 26, 27, 29, 30, 36, 37, 40, 41, and 43-45 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Leeds and Liu in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,691,156 (Drummond). Drummond, which is cited on page 6 of the Office Action as showing "a sending address approved for delivery," does not remedy the failure of Leeds and Liu to describe or suggest the noted features of the independent claims. For at least this reason, applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Dependent claims 4 and 8

Dependent claims 4 and 8 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Leeds, Liu, and Drummond in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,438,597 (Mosberger). Mosberger, which is cited on page 11 of the Office Action as teaching "a system and method for managing access to a data service system that supports persistent as well as non-persistent connections," does not remedy the failure of Leeds, Liu, and Drummond to describe or suggest the noted features of the independent claims 1. For at least this reason, applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Dependent claims 16, 28, and 42

Dependent claims 16, 28, and 42 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Leeds, Liu, and Drummond in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,766,352 (McBrearty). McBrearty, which is cited on page 12 of the Office Action as showing "a method and system for identifying to a user when files being displayed on a client system of a network are cached files," does not remedy the failure of Leeds, Liu, and Drummond to describe or suggest the noted features of the independent claims 1. For at least this reason, applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Dependent claims 18 and 32

Dependent claims 18 and 32 have been rejected as being unpatentable over Leeds and Liu in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,714,982 (McDonough). McDonough, which is cited as showing "handling a message sent from a sender to a recipient via a network server," does not remedy the failure of Leeds and Liu to describe or suggest the noted features of the independent claims 1. For at least this reason, applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

New Claims 53-58

New claims 53-57 depend from independent claim 1 and are believed to be allowable for at least the reasons that claim 1 is allowable.

Among other features, new independent claim 58 recites an electronic mail inbox configured to concurrently present first received electronic data including an endorsed electronic mail message, second received electronic data including a nonendorsed electronic mail message, and endorsement information associated with one of the first electronic data and the second electronic data, the endorsement information including presentable information that visually distinguishes endorsed messages from nonendorsed messages. Thus, claim 58 and its dependent claim 42 are believed to be allowable for reasons similar to those discussed above with respect to claim 1.

Conclusion

Applicant submits that all claims are in condition for allowance.

It is believed that all of the pending issues have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this reply should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this reply, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

Applicant : William N. Youstra
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No fees are believed due at this time. Nonetheless, please apply any charges or credits to Deposit Account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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Meghan A. McGovern
Reg. No. 60476

Fish & Richardson P.C.
1425 K Street, N.W.
11th Floor
Washington, DC 20005-3500
Telephone: (202) 783-5070
Facsimile: (877) 769-7945
40499457.doc